

MOBILE

Vertu helps consumers stay connected with complimentary WiFi

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Vertu Aster

By SARAH JONES

British smartphone maker Vertu is helping its consumers stay digitally connected on select devices with a complimentary WiFi subscription.

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Luxury Daily

Vertu users can now automatically access a secure Internet connection through iPass' 15 million hotspots around the world. For Vertu's globe trotting consumers, having the ability to use their phones as they travel will likely be appreciated.

"The Vertu iPass partnership makes sense as it can be convenient to have access to WiFi hotspots especially when traveling globally," said Simon Buckingham, CEO of [Appitalism](#), New York.

"Having access to global WiFi hotspots is just another benefit that Vertu customers can appreciate," he said. "You don't just buy a Vertu device for the shiny hardware specs but for the useful supplementary services."

Mr. Buckingham is not affiliated with Vertu or iPass, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Vertu and **iPass** did not respond by press deadline.

Global reach

iPass is the largest commercial WiFi network. Ninety-five of the world's top 100 airports, as well as 78,000 hotels and convention centers include hotspots. The service also offers premium Internet connectivity on 2,200 planes and 800 equipped trains.

Beyond travel, 60,000 hotspots are free and open-access.

Covering the globe, iPass reaches 120 countries. In Paris, for instance, more than 3,000 hotspots are located in restaurants, hotels and airports, including the Mandarin Oriental.



Map of hotspots in Paris

For Vertu customers, iPass enables them to access WiFi at many different locations with one single login, rather than having to pull out a credit card each time. There are no data caps, meaning consumers will not be prevented from performing certain tasks, for instance streaming video or Web conferencing.

iPass says its own data shows that consumers will opt for WiFi when given the choice.

Complimentary access to iPass will be available on Vertu Aster and Signature Touch models for six and 12 months, respectively.



Vertu Signature Touch

This may help convince Vertu consumers to upgrade their devices.

Vertu's Aster collection of mobile devices embody the three most important elements of all Vertu models: materials, services and technology.

Aster is similar to the other Vertu collections, but offers a new design, a wider range of options and a different combination of the technology. In the midst of new smartphones being released, such as Apple's iPhone 6, Vertu may stand out as offering a different

brand proposition ([see story](#)).

For its Signature Touch, Vertu partnered with the Danish audio and video company Bang & Olufsen, American audio company Dolby Laboratories and Swedish camera brand Hasselblad. The Signature Touch combines some of the best features from each partner to offer consumers a unique and lavish phone ([see story](#)).

Connecting consumers

Luxury jetsetters crave connectivity, leading many hotel brands to cater to them through services.

For instance, The Ritz-Carlton is appealing to digitally savvy consumers with a complimentary WiFi offer for its rewards members.

Starting Jan. 15, consumers who have joined The Ritz-Carlton Rewards and who book their stay directly through the hotel chain will have free in-room WiFi. This offer may help get consumers to go through the brand itself rather than OTAs when booking ([see story](#)).

As Vertu users travel from city to city, they will appreciate being able to connect their device almost anywhere.

"Global WiFi hotspots that are automatically connected to could save a traveler a lot of money and can be very convenient," Mr. Buckingham said.

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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